

TOP SECRET

25

30 October 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Morning Meeting of 30 October 1969

DD/I briefed on his meeting yesterday with ACDA Director Gerard Smith. In this connection, he highlighted the Director of Security's concern conveyed by the ADD/S with respect to the security situation [redacted]

[redacted] He noted that, upon being briefed, Gerard Smith shared this concern and indicated that he would welcome a memorandum on the subject. [redacted]

Godfrey noted that, if a truce between the Fedayeen and Lebanon ever existed, it is now off.



D/ONE briefed on the Air Force USIB representative's possible footnoting of the NIE on Communist China's Strategic Weapons Program.

Carver mentioned indications that two Special Forces outposts may come under Communist attack as early as within the next ten days.

Carver commented upon the less-than-satisfactory results growing out of a State Circular Telegram asking that ambassadors undertake to advertise progress made in Vietnam over the past year.

Maury reported that Walter Pincus greatly appreciated [redacted] being present at the Symington Subcommittee hearings and [redacted]

TOP SECRET

25

TOP SECRET

25

went on to underline his appreciation for our forthright testimony pertaining to Laos.

Maury reported receipt of a request from Bob Michaels for comment on Admiral Rickover's material pertaining to the number of Soviet maritime engineers. He added that [redacted] is at work in response to this request.

25

Maury noted that he was in touch with Ed Braswell and determined that Chairman Stennis could be expected to have reservations about the retroactive provisions of the proposed amendments to the Agency's retirement act. Braswell feels that this amendment should await House consideration before testing Chairman Stennis on his attitude.

The Director asked that Maury and Houston not consult him on corrections in their review of his testimony before the Symington Subcommittee unless in their good judgment the item being corrected is of particular significance.

Houston noted that [redacted] will be here for lunch tomorrow. The Director asked that the ADD/P attend.

25

[redacted]

[redacted]

25

[redacted]

Goodwin called attention to the editorial in today's Washington Post, "Xanadu Revisited." A brief discussion followed.

[redacted]

25

L. K. White

TOP SECRET

25

The Washington Post

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30, 1969

PAGE A20

Xanadu Revisited

Once upon a time in Xanadu there was a bold and resourceful leader, a chieftain of fierce mountain tribesmen. Once a sergeant, he is now a major general. He has acquired a city of his own, and a 36,000-man force known as the armee clandestine. Every week or so an American arrives at the mountain redoubt carrying a large black bag . . .

which, Xandau being Laos, contains money. Thanks to the revealing interviews granted by Senator Fulbright yesterday, we are now closer than ever to the ominous sense of *deja vu* in Laos. Senator Fulbright's information paralleled that which Mr. Henry Kamm has given the readers of the New York Times. At any event, Major General Vang Pao, the chieftain in question, is now assumed to be the man who will stand off 50,000 Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese, and keep Laos secure in the Western camp. American officials appear to be only a breath away from describing him as the George Washington of the Meo, or perhaps the Julius Caesar of Southeast Asia. In case anyone missed it, we have been around this track before.

General Vang Pao is financed, supplied and supported by the American government (it is odd that CIA is always made to carry the can for what is obviously government policy). Pao's army is a private one, operating outside the orbit of the "government" in Vientiane; the impression is that it is an army controlled jointly by Pao and his American advisers. American aircraft fly air cover, the troops shoot American weapons, are trained by American military advisers, and are paid with American funds. Dollars have bought the general and his troops what is described as a private capital city, the secret military headquarters at Long Cheng in the northeast of Laos. Why is this happening?

The argument, which is a familiar one, is that the generals in the regular army of Laos are corrupt and indolent, and the regular Lao troops therefore combat ineffective. To truly counter the Communist thrust, the Lao need the sort of tough,

brave, resourceful leadership that only a Vang Pao can give them. "He is esteemed as one of the few generals in Laos who can be relied upon to use all the weapons turned over to him to arm his troops instead of allowing them to disappear into a black market in which they all have to be repurchased," writes Mr. Kamm.

And what does the general get in return? Well, two trips to America, for one thing, the last beginning at Disneyland (where he bought a Zorro suit) and ending at Williamsburg, presumably to contemplate the circumstances of the American Founding Fathers. There are the trips and plenty of money and houses for himself and his junior officers.

Vang Pao may be everything the Americans in Laos say he is, but we ought to remember the number of "real tigers" we ran through in South Vietnam; enough, by any account, to fill a large-sized preserve. Does it strike anyone as odd that this brave, resourceful leader needs so much assistance from the United States? Why are the Meo fighting, other than to protect the opium-producing poppy fields? Certainly it is not that they are somehow genetically anti-Communist, for in the north of Thailand the Meo *are* the Communists. Does it strike anyone here as repugnant that we have recruited politically unconscious mountain people to do our fighting for us—because it is the Americans who want Communists stopped in Laos, not the Lao who are probably the gentlest and most pacific people on earth.

So we ask the question again: What is this government's policy in Laos? What is the CIA doing financing private armies, and what does the administration hope to accomplish with them? Does this government really think that General Vang Pao can hold off the army of North Vietnam? If the administration is unwilling to answer these questions, perhaps the Symington Committee in the Senate will oblige. The much-publicized hearings on Laos end this week, and we will all await the transcript with great interest.

30 OCT 1969

ROGERS SAYS LAOS POLICY WILL REMAIN

Involvement Is Called 'Unusual, Irregular' By Fulbright

By NATHAN MILLER

[Washington Bureau of The Sun]

Washington, Oct. 29 — William P. Rogers, Secretary of State, and Senator J. William Fulbright, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, were in sharp conflict today over the American commitment to Laos.

"I don't think there is going to be any change in policy—now," Mr. Rogers said following a 3½-hour closed-door meeting with the committee.

But Senator Fulbright, who has charged that the United States is spending \$150 million annually to support a clandestine army of 36,000 men in Laos, called this participation "most unusual and irregular, if not not unconstitutional."

Missile Testing

In an appearance that ranged over the spectrum of foreign affairs, Mr. Rogers asked the committee to delay action on a proposal for a joint halt with the Russians of testing of multiple-warhead missiles, but Senator Fulbright said, "He didn't talk us out of it."

In a development related to the Laos situation, Senator John Sherman Cooper (R., Ky.) said that he would seek to amend forthcoming appropriations bills to bar any military operations in support of local forces in either Laos or Thailand.

"We should not move step by step into new wars in Laos or Thailand as we did in Vietnam," the senator added.

Secretary Rogers rejected charges that the government had acted without authority or

the knowledge of Congress in becoming involved in the increasingly controversial "twilight" war in Laos.

Thought Congress Knew

He emphasized that the administration is following a policy initiated by President Kennedy and carried on by President Johnson and added that he thought Congress knew what was happening.

A foreign relations subcommittee headed by Senator Stuart Symington (D., Mo.) is investigating the depth of the American commitment in Laos, and Senator Fulbright had told newsmen, "I think the hearings will alter the administration's policy."

When informed of Mr. Rogers's statement that there would be no change, the senator replied, "I regret that if it's true. We thoroughly disagree with this kind of action. I had hoped that they would change it."

He added that the conduct of such operations without the knowledge of Congress was permissible only in a "dictatorship." Congress had only peripheral knowledge of U.S. operations, for example, the bombing of the Ho Chi Minh trail.

"We have had no knowledge of such a war on so huge a scale—involving expenditures of \$150 million a year—and that's not all," he said, "It's quite a war."

The senator said that he was referring to Central Intelligence Agency participation in anti-Communist operations in Laos, adding that it was impossible to determine the full cost because funds for the agency are "covered up" in the budget.

Asked if he agreed with the Arkansas Democrat's views, Senator George D. Aiken (R., Vt.), the ranking Republican member of the committee, replied, "I think he is right."

For his part, Secretary Rogers expressed surprise about Senator Fulbright's charges, saying, "I thought Congress was familiar with what we are doing there . . . We thought Congress understood it."

He added that there were "no ground forces" in Laos, a statement previously made by the administration.

When asked if Senator Fulbright's statements about American activities in Laos paralleled what his subcommittee had learned, Senator Symington declared, "I never knew the chairman to make a misstatement in this field."

But Senator Mike Mansfield (D., Mont.), the majority leader and a subcommittee member, said that he had learned "noth-

ing new in the hearings that I didn't know before."

Mr. Rogers was to have testified in open session on Vietnam, but the meeting was postponed because of President Nixon's speech next Monday night on that subject.

The Secretary was called to appear to discuss a resolution reflecting Senate opinion proposed by Senator Edward W. Brooke (R., Mass.) and 42 cosponsors asking the President to seek a joint moratorium on testing of multiple-warhead missiles, known as MIRV's.

"I don't think it would be helpful to have any further talk on the MIRV's, but I didn't strongly oppose it," Mr. Rogers said of the resolution.

Senator Fulbright said that the official had made clear the administration's opposition to the Brooke resolution but added that he still favored it.

"I have the feeling that this administration doesn't like the idea of the Senate giving orders to the administration on foreign policy," he remarked. The senator added that the committee would meet shortly on the resolution.

ROGERS DISPUTES FULBRIGHT ON LAOS

**Asserts Congress Receives
Full Information on U.S.
Role in Secret Warfare**

By RICHARD HALLORAN

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Oct. 29 —

Secretary of State William P. Rogers disputed Senator J. W. Fulbright today on his allegation that the State Department had not kept the Senate Foreign Relations Committee fully informed on American military operations in Laos.

Mr. Rogers told reporters after a closed committee hearing that he was surprised by the Senator's charge. "I thought Congress was familiar with what we are doing there," he said. "We thought Congress understood it."

Discussing the policy toward Laos, Mr. Rogers said he did not think that there was going to be a change now. Nixon Administration sources have said that a Foreign Relations subcommittee's inquiry into the Laotian issue had stimulated the Administration to begin rethinking policy on Laos.

Fundamental Issue Raised

Senator Fulbright, Democrat of Arkansas and chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, insisted during the hearing that the Administration had not briefed him or the committee on the United States involvement in the clandestine war in Laos. He made similar remarks yesterday in public.

The dispute underscored a fundamental issue on the making of American foreign policy: Just what does the Constitution demand of the Executive branch in seeking the advice and consent of the Senate in the conduct of foreign affairs?

More and more has been heard on the matter as doubts about the United States' participation in the war in Vietnam

has grown. First the process by which the United States became enmeshed in Vietnam was questioned, and the questioning has spread to other foreign-policy matters.

Congressional sources said the major part of the hearing today was taken up with a recapitulation.

Mr. Rogers was also reported to have asked the committee not to press a resolution calling for a moratorium on the testing of multiple independent re-entry vehicles, a nuclear-armed missile known as MIRV. Mr. Fulbright said later that the committee would consider the request but that Mr. Rogers "didn't talk us out of it."

Opponents contend that it would withhold a bargaining instrument from the United States delegation when it meets representatives of the Soviet Union in Helsinki next month to begin preliminary discussions on restraining the strategic arms race.

The Secretary was reported to have told the committee that the United States would enter those negotiations with "no conditions at all" on what can be negotiated.

On the Laotian issue, Senator Fulbright said that he did not believe there was any authority for United States military aid to Laos.

"I don't think anyone in the Congress, with the possible exception of one or two members of the Appropriations Committee, knew anything about it," he added.

Rogers Cites Precedents

Mr. Rogers, who indicated that he doubted that the American actions in Laos were unconstitutional, contended that the Administration was following the policy set by the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations.

An inquiry to the State Department for specifics about when Congress had been briefed on Laos was inconclusive. Officials said they were looking at the record to determine how information had been passed to the legislators.

Administration sources contended that Senators had been informed and pointed out that several members of Congress and staff men had visited Laos and been fully briefed at the embassy in Vientiane.

The sources also maintained that a number of Senators had been told what is going on but had not focused on the significance of the information. Just as with Vietnam, some maintained, the Senators were informed and then suddenly realized what the facts added up to.

Both Administration and Congressional sources agreed that the dispute was part of a continuing search by the Senate for a role in the making of foreign policy. An aide to Senator Fulbright said his contentions were a reflection of his feeling that the Senate's role had been subverted.

Congressional sources also noted that the Senators themselves were partly at fault for neglecting to assert themselves. Mr. Fulbright is reported to share the feeling.